

Castlemaine Naturalist

November 2022

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Monthly newsletter of the
Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc.



Crimson Sun-orchid *Thelymitra xmacmillanii*
photo by Cathrine Harboe-Ree

In search of orchids

Report and photographs, Cathrine Harboe-Ree

It has been a wonderful year for wildflowers, not least native orchids, which have been putting on quite a show this year. On Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 October members of the Victorian branch of the Australian Native Orchid Society (ANOS) came to our district to see what they could find.

On the Saturday 20 ANOS members joined local orchid conservationist Julie Radford – whose nursery and laboratory we visited in August – and two environmental scientists from Coliban Water. The aim for the day was to look for the extremely rare Mclvor Spider Orchid, *Caladenia audasii*, in Coliban Water's Spring Gully Reservoir Reserve. I reported after our visit to Julie Radford's that we saw this orchid flowering in her nursery. Unfortunately, we did not find any in the Reserve, although Julie pointed out that it is useful for her to know where they are not flowering, as well as where they are. Given the fact there are only five known colonies in the wild, comprising a total of six plants, it was perhaps not surprising that we did not find any.

We did find a range of other orchids in flower, including *Thelymitra megcalyptra*, the Scented Sun Orchid, *Calochilus robertsonii*, the Purple Beard-orchid, *Caladenia fuscata*, the early flowering form of Pink Fingers, Dusky Caladenia, and a good number of *Pterostylis cycnocephala*, or Swan Orchid, which is uncommon in our area. Apart from *Caladenia fuscata*, which was flowering in good numbers in the Castlemaine area as well at the time, the other orchids we found in Bendigo that day were all flowering earlier than the same species closer to Castlemaine.

On the Sunday I led the group in a search for orchids in the immediate Castlemaine area. When planning for this day I was helped by a number of our local experts, including Judy and Phil Hopley, David Elliott, Richard Piesse, Jenny Rolland and Euan Moore.

We started the day in the Maldon Historic Reserve, where we were greeted by an almost solid carpet of wildflowers. It really was impossible to walk through the bush without standing on something. In a period of about 2.5 hours we found 16 different species of orchid in flower. These were: *Caladenia carnea* (Pink Fingers),

Caladenia cucullata (Hooded Caladenia), *Caladenia fuscata* (Dusky Caladenia), *Caladenia moschata* (Musky Caladenia), *Cyanicula caerulea*, (Blue Caladenia), *Cyrtostylis reniformis* (Gnat Orchid), *Diuris chryseopsis* (Golden Moths), *Diuris pardina* (Leopard Orchid), *Glossodia major* (Wax-lip Orchid – in their thousands!), *Pterostylis nana* (Dwarf Greenhood), *Pterostylis nutans* (Nodding Greenhood), *Thelymitra antennifera* (Rabbit's Ear Orchid), *Thelymitra ixioides* (Spotted Sun Orchid), *Thelymitra megalyptra* (Scented Sun Orchid), *Thelymitra pauciflora* (Slender Sun Orchid) and *Thelymitra xmacmillanii* (Crimson Sun Orchid).

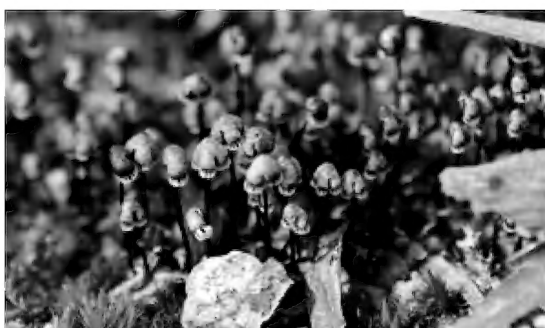
The sheer number of species was very pleasing to the group, and the highlight of the morning was a colony of *Thelymitra xmacmillanii* (Crimson Sun-orchids), which many had not seen before. Shown here is a photo (on the left) of *Thelymitra xmacmillanii* beside a *Thelymitra rubra* (on the right, photographed 23 October 2022), which is the much more common Salmon, or Pink, Sun Orchid. Although the two species can be the same shade of pink, there are a number of ways to tell them apart.



One way to identify them is to look at the columns (that is, the central elements of the flowers). The lateral arms at the top of *Thelymitra xmacmillanii* are a distinctive yellow colour, whereas they are orange on *Thelymitra rubra*. Another way to identify them is by size – the *Thelymitra rubra* flower is generally a few millimetres smaller than *Thelymitra xmacmillanii*. *Thelymitra xmacmillanii* is a cross between *Thelymitra antennifera* (Rabbit's Ear Orchid) and *Thelymitra megalyptra* (Scented Sun Orchid), and these species can often be found in its proximity.

While in the Maldon Historic Reserve, ANOS members were delighted to see many of the other local wildflowers, including the rare *Grevillea micrantha*, (Small-flowered Grevillea), *Rhytidosporum procumbens* (White Marianth) and *Calytrix tetragona* (Common Fringe-myrtle).

A nice find was *Asterella drummondii* fruiting. Although this is a liverwort, the fruiting bodies look very much like tiny fungi.



The finale for the day was a visit to The Monk to see *Caladenia clavescens* (Castlemaine Spider Orchid), which was another species most of the ANOS visitors had not seen before. Two different colour forms are shown here:



South East Australian Naturalists' Association (SEANA) – Spring Camp 2022

On Friday September 30 – Sunday October 2, members of several Field Naturalists Clubs from around SE Australia gathered at Merricks Lodge for the SEANA Spring Camp, hosted by the Peninsular Field Naturalists Club. These camps, held twice a year, are a wonderful opportunity to explore different areas for their flora and fauna as well as geology under the guidance of enthusiastic local naturalists. At the recent camp, several full or half day excursions were on offer. Reports by Euan and Geraldine on some of these follow. The SEANA Autumn Camp will be held at Port Campbell, hosted by the Timboon Field Naturalists Club, 28-30 April. Mark this in your diary!

Saturday 1st October. Orchids and other wildflowers – Crib Point and Stony Point (Euan Moore)

This excursion lead by Judy Smart from Peninsular Field Naturalists Club visited several small reserves in the Crib Point and Stony Point Areas. First stop was a reserve at Stony Point sandwiched between the Railway and Defense Department land. Over a short walk up the hill behind the caravan park Judy showed us Wallflower Orchid, *Diuris orientis*, Tall Leek Orchid, *Prasophyllum elatum*, *P. spicatum*, Rabbit's Ears *Thelymitra antennifera*, and the similar Twisted Sun-orchid *T. flexuosa*.

From here we moved on to the Crib Point Bushland Reserve where there was a magnificent display of Brown Beaks, *Lyperanthus suaveolens*.

Our lunchtime stop was at Woolleys Beach, Stony Point where we walked a short stretch of coastal track and were shown White Fingers, *Caladenia catenata*, Pink Fairies, *C. latifolia*, as well as Pink Fingers, Nodding Greenhood and Small Mosquito Orchid.

Our final stop for the day was a nearby area of woodland and grassy heathland in Lorimer St. This area of public land is currently managed for native orchids. The highlight of this stop was a patch of magnificent plants of Great Sun-orchid, *Thelymitra aristata*, [photos right] some around 75cm high with more than 20 open flowers. Other orchids in this area included *Caladenia catenata*, *C. parva*, and *C. clavigera*.

In addition to the orchids that were a feature of the day there were many other wildflowers in bloom at the different stops.

Sunday 2nd October. Coolart Wetlands and Balbirooroo Wetlands (Euan Moore)

The emphasis for this trip led by Val Ford was the birds. Coolart is a well known birding hotspot with walks around the various wetlands and down to the beach through coastal sand-dune vegetation. After assembling at the homestead the group made its way down to the main wetland and bird hide where time was spent finding the various waterbirds. The Australian Ibis were nesting in front of the hide and Welcome Swallows nesting inside the hide. There were several species of duck on the water including a few Blue-billed Duck.

From the hide, the group made its way around some of the other wetlands and down to the beach. There were few birds on the beach and a lone dolphin occasionally surfacing in the shipping channel. Some of the group also saw native Swamp Rat in the dunes near the small estuary.



Australian Ibis rookery at Coolart: EM

After lunch in the Coolart gardens we drove to the Balbirooroo Wetlands at Balnarring. This is an area of restored wetland with walking tracks along levee banks and a bird hide. This was another excellent birding spot with good numbers of both bush and water birds to be seen.

At Coolart we saw 57 bird species, 1 mammal and 1 reptile. At Balbirooroo we saw 37 bird species, 1 mammal and heard 1 frog.

Saturday 1st October. Excursion to Cape Schanck – Geology (Geraldine Harris)

On a sunny still morning we began by walking from Cape Schanck to Bushrangers Bay. The route started out along the clifftop through coastal vegetation with views back along the cliffs towards the Cape Schanck lighthouse and Pulpit Rock. Some flowering plants we saw included Coast Twinleaf (*Roepera billardierei*), Coast Flax-lily (*Dianella brevicaulis*), Coastal Grounzel (*Senecio pinnatifolius* var. *lanceolatus*), Pink Fairies (*Caladenia latifolia*) and Maroonhoods (*Pterostylis pedunculata*).

Eventually we descended down onto the beach where there were good examples of the different basalt layers that had formed over time. Unfortunately the tide was too high to do the short walk to Burrabong Creek for a close-up view of a cliff of freshwater limestone capped by Dune Calcerenite but we were able to view it, and some Red Tuff (volcaniclastic rock composed of solid volcanic ash) at the waters edge, from the cliff track above.

Cape Schanck was named in the 1800s after a Captain John Schank, R.N. but the name was mis-spelt. The name Bushranger Bay is derived from an event in 1853 when two convicts hijacked a schooner to escape from Van Diemens Land and demanded to be put ashore in this bay. They made their way inland, violently shooting and pillaging as they went, but within twelve months they were apprehended in Kilmore and eventually hung in the Melbourne goal.

Our next stop was for lunch at the Fingal Picnic Ground, off Cape Schanck Road, and from here we did the short 1.8 km Fingal Circuit walk. This clifftop walk took us to two lookouts to see distorted basalt columns one way and in the other direction we had clear views along the Nepean Peninsula where we could see evidence of the Selwyn Fault. Our leader described the network of faults including the Tyabb, Selwyn, and Flinders faults and another one through Dromana, that criss-cross the peninsular making it quite a vulnerable area should these faults become active in the future.

Flower plants in this area were Slender Bush-pea (*Pultenaea tenuifolia*), Coastal Groundsel (*Senecio pinnatifolius* var. *lanceolatus*), Running Postman (*Kennedia prostrata*), and Thyme Rice-flower (*Pimelea serpyllifolia* subsp. *serpyllifolia*).

Birds recorded on the day were Silver Eyes, Little Wattlebirds, Grey Shrike Thrush, Grey Fantail, Peregrine Falcon, Kelp Gull, Silver Gull, and a Crescent Honeyeater.

After dinner Leon Costermans entertained us all with his talk 'Discovering the stories underlying landscapes in Victoria' to illustrate how naturalists can get the most from his forthcoming book 'Stories Beneath our Feet' about geology and landscapes. His new book is due out in November and Leon recommends reading the Introduction first to get the most from his book. His talk provided an appropriate end to a really interesting day.



Cape Schanck and Pulpit Rock

Photos by Geraldine Harris



Pink Fairies (*Caladenia latifolia*)



Maroonhoods (*Pterostylis pedunculata*)



Bushranger Bay



Basalt Layers at Bushrangers Bay



Twin-leaf (*Roepera billardierei*)



Distorted Basalt columns viewed from Fingal Circuit walk



Evidence of the Selwyn Fault looking towards Point Nepean

Wednesday Wildflower Wander 3, Boundary Track

September 21

A number of members braved a cool and cloudy evening to explore locations on Centre track and Boundary track to the north-west of Castlemaine.

List of plants flowering (Euan Moore and Geraldine Harris)

<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	Gold-dust Wattle	<i>Grevillea alpina</i>	Downy Grevillea
<i>Acacia aspera</i>	Rough Wattle	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Purple Coral-pea
<i>Acacia gunnii</i>	Ploughshare Wattle	<i>Microseris walteri</i>	Murnong/Yam Daisy
<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle	<i>Philotheca verrucosa</i>	Fairy Wax-flower
<i>Caladenia fuscata</i>	Dusky Fingers	<i>Pimelea linifolia</i> ssp. <i>linifolia</i>	Slender Rice-flower
<i>Cassytha glabella</i>	Slender Dodder-laurel		
(seeds present)		<i>Pterostylis nana</i>	Dwarf Greenhood
<i>Cyanicula caerulea</i>	Blue Caladenia	<i>Pterostylis nutans</i>	Nodding Greenhood
<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i> ssp. <i>ruscifolia</i>	Gorse Bitter Pea	<i>Rhytidosporum procumbens</i>	White Marianth
<i>Diuris pardina</i>	Leopard Orchid	<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>	Creamy Candles
<i>Drosera auriculata</i>	Tall Sundew	<i>Tetratheca ciliata</i>	Pink Bells
<i>Drosera macrantha</i> subsp. <i>planchonii</i>	Climbing Sundew	<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i>	Sticky Everlasting
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i> subsp. <i>pruinosa</i>	Yellow Gum (flowers on ground)	(in bud)	



Blue Caladenia



Leopard Orchid

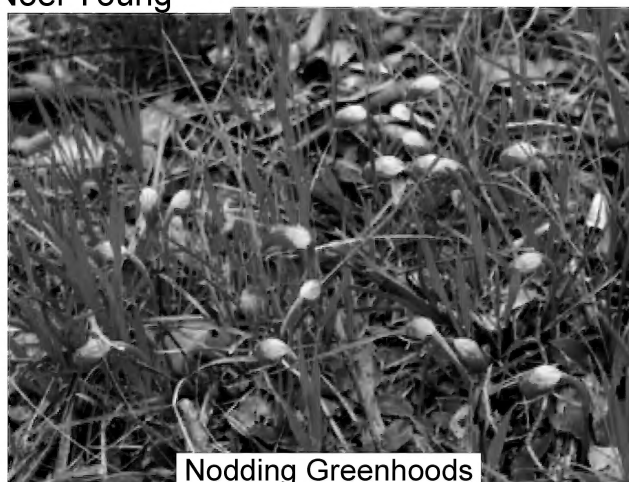


Climbing Sundew

Photos by Noel Young



Gorse Bitter Pea



Nodding Greenhoods

Wednesday Wildflower Wander 4; Sinclairs Lane

September 28

List of plants likely to have been seen flowering at Sinclairs/Carpenters Lanes and Donkey Farm Track on the 28 September wildflower walk. - Judy Hopley

Downy Grevillea (<i>Grevillea alpina</i>)	Fairy Waxflower (<i>Philotheca verrucosa</i>)
– red, apricot and yellow varieties.	Pink Fingers (<i>Caladenia carnea</i>)
Small-flowered Grevillea (<i>Grevillea micrantha</i>)	Hooded Caladenia (<i>Caladenia cucullata</i>)
Red Parrot-pea (<i>Dillwynia hispida</i>)	Musky Caladenia (<i>Caladenia gracilis</i>)
Matted Bush-pea (<i>Pultenaea pedunculata</i>)	Blue Caladenia (<i>Cyanicula caerulea</i>)
Daphne Heath (<i>Brachyloma daphnoides</i>)	Waxlip Orchid (<i>Glossodia major</i>)
Milkmaids (<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>)	Scented Sun-orchid (<i>Thelymitra megalyptra</i>)
Tall Sundew (<i>Drosera auriculata</i>)	– leaves and buds only
Scented Sundew (<i>Drosera aberrans</i>)	Rabbit Ears (<i>Thelymitra antennifera</i>)
Yam Daisy (<i>Microseris walteri</i>)	– leaves and buds only
Early Nancy (<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>)	Crimson Sun-orchid (<i>Thelymitra xmacmillanii</i>)
Slender Rice-flower (<i>Pimelea linifolia</i>)	– leaves and buds only
Gold-dust Wattle (<i>Acacia acinacea</i>)	Golden Moths (<i>Diuris chryseopsis</i>)
Billy Buttons (<i>Craspedia variabilis</i>)	
Sticky Everlasting (<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i>)	For those who continued after the formal walk ended:
Chocolate Lily (<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>)	Small Gnat Orchid (<i>Cyrtostylis reniformis</i>)
Pink Bells (<i>Tetratheca ciliata</i>)	Swan Greenhood (<i>Pterostylis cycnocephala</i>)
Annual Fireweed (<i>Senecio glomeratus</i>)	



Clockwise from above -
Grevillea micrantha,
Cyrtostylis reniformis,
Glossodia major
 Photos by Judy Hopley



Thelymitra antennifera



Diuris chryseopsis



Drosera peltata

Above: More photos at Sinclairs Lane, by Noel Young, October 3.

Annual Challenge Bird Count – cancelled for 2022

Chris Timewell

BirdLife Australia has not yet reinstated the Annual Challenge Bird Count (ACBC) following the COVID-related cancellations of 2020 and 2021. As such, there will not be an official ACBC event held in 2022.

For those that are new to the ACBC, it is a designated day (usually within the first weekend in December) when teams from across Australia aim to record as many different species as they can from within their local area (e.g., 25km radius around a central point). Bird numbers and breeding activity are also documented. From the late 1980s/early 1990s until 2019, the CFNC annually had a team involved in this event – with small groups comprising the Castlemaine region team distributed to a range of birdwatching hotspots. In most years we collectively detected around 100 different species from greater Castlemaine, including waterbirds, woodland and grassland birds, garden specialists, etc.

However, despite the absence of the official ACBC in 2022, I would encourage CFNC members and supporters to consider undertaking an unofficial search using the same approach across a half day or more. I'm planning to join some birdwatching friends on this weekend to see how many birds we can detect in the Baringhup-Maldon area. All of our records will be lodged into Birddata (birddata.birdlife.org.au/home), and we'll also generate a summary article for the subsequent CFNC newsletter.

If you'd like further information or guidance on establishing your own unofficial 'challenge' day, please feel free to get in touch (c_timewell@hotmail.com).

Needle grass news

Margaret Panter

With the cooler weather, new needle grass plants have been slow to appear and develop this season. But the rain could eventually result in a bumper germination from seeds still in the soil. Although this would mean more work this season getting rid of them, it would also mean the soil seed bank would be exhausted quicker, which would be a help in the long run. Needle grasses are a major threat to native grasslands and other ecosystems.

Working bees to dig out needle grass at the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens are likely to start in early November. New volunteers are especially welcome.

The exact dates will depend on how much needle grass has come up, what stage it's at, the weather, when the area is mowed and the progress Council Parks & Gardens workers have made repairing flood damage. In late October part of the needle grass area was closed to the public due to trees down or likely to fall, and machinery couldn't be brought in to clear the area because the soil was too wet.

In the last 5 years, thanks to the work of over 30 volunteers, as well as Council Parks & Gardens workers, we've made a lot of progress towards ridding the Gardens of needle grass (Cane NG – *Nassella hyalina*, Chilean NG – *N. neesiana* and Texas NG – *N. leucotricha*). Attending one or more working bees is an opportunity to help with this work, and also to learn more about identification of grasses and other plants. Or it can be regarded as a social outing.

Please ring me if you'd like to help. (phone 5470 5072 between 7am and 7pm)

Reference (<https://castlemainefieldnaturalists.org.au/important-weeds/>) for the brochure "Distinguishing between needle grasses and native grasses" on the **Important Weeds** section of the club's website. A new brochure will soon be available on Chilean Needlegrass, and paper copies will eventually be available at the working bees.

October Meeting and Excursion Report

At our October meeting we had planned to have a talk by Ms Georgie Custance from the Threatened Species Conservancy about her project of mapping and examining the ecology of Fryerstown Greville, *Grevillea obtecta*. This was to be followed by an excursion to one of the sites where this species occurs with a demonstration on how to record occurrence of this restricted range species.

Unfortunately the weather was against us with severe flooding across much of the state which caused us to cancel both the meeting and excursion. We hope to have Georgie to talk at our February meeting and will run a similar excursion although probably not with the same profusion of flowers in the bush.

If you are interested in contributing to this project you can find out more on our Fryerstown Grevillea webpage where there are instructions on how to download the app to your phone and record details of this Grevillea.

<p>Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the club</p>

**Invitation to
the 44th Annual Stella Bedggood Memorial Lecture
Friday 4 November, 2022 at 7.30pm**

Dear Field Nat's,

We are excited to invite you to the 44th Annual Stella Bedggood Memorial Lecture on Friday 4 November, 2022 at 7.30pm. Please find your invitation attached. This event will be a hybrid event, giving you the opportunity to either attend in person at the Federation University building on the corner of Gillies St and Gregory St, Wendouree or via Zoom if you prefer. We tried out the technology during our Committee Meeting last night and it worked really well, with the broadcast of the speaker's presentation and audio both of a high quality.

Please RSVP to me (ballaratfnc@gmail.com) noting whether you plan to attend in person or would like to receive the Zoom link.

If you are planning to attend in person, it would be great if you could bring along some flowers to decorate the room and/ or some supper to share after the presentation.

Mask-wearing is strongly encouraged.

Kind regards,

Emily Noble

**Secretary, Field Naturalists' Club of Ballarat
0433 344 287**

New guide to the "Insects of Central Victoria"

This excellent, pocket-sized booklet has been produced recently by the Upper Campaspe Landcare Network and other groups in the area, ably led by John Walters. It provides an easy-to-use guide to help us identify the insect species most likely to be found in our gardens and nearby bushland, with reference to other resources for further information.

Each insect group has a short and interesting introduction highlighting the wonderful diversity and fascinating world of insects. The succinct text for individual species (over 220!) is well complimented by brilliant photographs (largely by John) showing key identifying features. A clever set of 4 icons for each species presents the most common lifestyle/food and habitat for both larval and adult forms. This guide will be invaluable for monitoring insect species as part of revegetation project follow-up and for adding to databases such as iNaturalist to better record our local fauna.



The guide is free and available from Macedon Ranges Shire offices and landcare groups, but can also be accessed as an [ebook](#) online.

Jenny Rolland

Control serrated tussock before seeding

Media Release: 11th Oct 2022

Now is the ideal time to check your property for the noxious weed serrated tussock (*Nassella trichotoma*). The recent rains and warm start to spring in some parts of Victoria has been good for pastures and crops, but unfortunately, also good for the growth of serrated tussock. Controlling serrated tussock before the plant goes to seed is critical to prevent further spread, lost productivity and increased control requirements.

“Before seeding, serrated tussock has a lime green appearance. When seeding the flowerheads have a distinctive purple colour developing as the seeds ripen in late spring and early summer. These features help serrated tussock stand out from the native tussock grasses,” **Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party** Chairperson Lance Jennison said.



The VSTWP has developed an online video and information sheet to help landowners identify the unwanted grass, at <http://www.serratedtussock.com/how-identify-serrated-tussock>

“Serrated tussock has a fine leaf and will roll smoothly between the index finger and thumb, while native tussocks feel as though they have flat edges,” Mr Jennison said. “The leaves also feel rough when you run your fingers downwards due to fine serrations,” he said. “A mature serrated tussock plant can produce thousands of seeds in a season, blowing up to 20 kilometres from the parent plant.”

Before they flower and seed, serrated tussock plants can be controlled with a registered herbicide, manual removal or cultivation. “Having a healthy pasture and competitive ground cover is one of the most important aspects to weed management. Serrated tussock is a prime example of a weed that does not like competition and well established pastures,” Mr Jennison said.

It’s estimated that serrated tussock now covers more than 250,000 hectares of land in Victoria. Treating plants prior to seeding is vital to prevent further spread across Victoria and impacts on our agricultural and environmental assets. It is best to control serrated tussock before it gets out of control. Large infestations require ongoing management and the integration of a number of control techniques, which can cost large sums of money and time.

The VSTWP recently commissioned case studies on the economic costs of not treating serrated tussock, which concluded that if serrated tussock is left to infest a property or landscape, the cost of controlling it will be at least five times higher than if it was prevented in the first instance”. This is a massive cost saving and an important message to deliver to landowners who have untreated plants on their property.

For further information, please visit www.serratedtussock.com, or contact the VSTWP on info@serratedtussock.com

Revised Walk Brochure

We have updated the brochure *A Walk to the Botanical Gardens via Kalimna Park* to reflect changes to the walking paths, especially where the walk described in the brochure overlaps with the Kalimna Circuit Track. We have also updated contact information about the Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club.

The brochure was originally created by Ern Perkins. It describes a 7.5 km walk that starts and finishes at the Information Centre in Mostyn Street, and is an excellent introduction to Castlemaine's urban, bush and cultivated garden environments. It can be downloaded from the 'Explore' section of the club's website.



Photo: Castlemaine from the Burke and Wills Monument

- Cathrine Harboe-Ree, CFNC Publications working group convenor

Birds of Sutton Grange October 2022

Nigel Harland

Superb Fairy-wren
Australian Raven
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
New Holland Honeyeater
Red Wattlebird
Grey Currawong
Horsefields Bronze-cuckoo
Brown Falcon

White-browed Scrubwren
Laughing Kookaburra
Long-billed Corella
Welcome Swallow
Galah
Eurasian Blackbird
Shining Bronze-cuckoo
Eastern Spinebill

Australian Magpie
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
Crimson Rosella
Common Bronzewing
Striated Pardalote
House Sparrow
Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Willie Wagtail

Photo Observations

Geraldine Harris

I took these photos last week and think they may be a clue to Cathrine's mystery plant in the newsletter last month. The hairy leaves suggest new growth on a *Dillwynia sericea* plant perhaps?



Noel Young Several reports of Swan Greenhoods *Pterostylis cycnocephala* this spring; this one was in a substantial patch of them at the Rise and Shine reserve. Found nearby were several examples of the uncommon Scarlet Sundew *Drosera glanduligera*. They are tiny and easily overlooked if not in flower.



Jill Williams First time nesting in our tree - 3 juvenile White-faced Herons - and they spend a lot of time on branches over the dam.
A 'Stink / Shield bug' on the trunk of a Yellow box tree 75% identity
An 'orb weaver spider' on an Eucalypt leaf. - low identity value.



Manoli Photakis
Jacky Lizard



Geraldine Harris We found these sugar gliders in one of our nesting boxes that had previously been taken over by bees. The gliders appear to have eaten their way into the honeycomb to make a pretty comfy and sweet smelling home.



COMING EVENTS

MONTHLY MEETING: Friday 11th November, 7.30pm

Uniting Church Chapel, Lyttleton St, Castlemaine (note change of room)

Speaker: Dr Christina McCowan (University of Melbourne)

“*Mycobacterium ulcerans* (Buruli ulcer) in our native mammals in the wild”

Mycobacterium ulcerans is a bacterium causing ulcerative skin disease (Buruli ulcer) in humans and animals, mainly in tropical regions, particularly in West Africa. However, the organism was first isolated and described in Gippsland, Victoria, and became known here as Bairnsdale ulcer. Clinical disease continues to occur in some coastal regions as far west as Barwon Heads.



Although several domestic species have been diagnosed with infections, marsupials may be particularly susceptible and DNA of the organism has been found in the faeces of possums, particularly Ringtail Possums, from affected regions.

What this means for the epidemiology of the disease is unclear, as are some factors in the pattern of outbreaks and their limited distribution. In this talk, Christina will explain the work that is ongoing to clarify the features of the disease and the role of wild mammals in its spread.

EXCURSION: Saturday 12th November, 1.30 pm “Fryers Ridge”

Leader: Richard Piesse

It has been a wonderful season for the wildflowers in our area. With Fryers Ridge being somewhat higher and cooler than other areas we explored during the September Wildflower Wanders, this walk will give us the chance to enjoy the later flowering species under the guidance of our expert member Richard Piesse.

Meet: 1.30 pm at the Octopus (Duke St, opposite the Castle Motel).

Bring: Water, afternoon tea, sturdy shoes and hat.

The Field Trip will be cancelled in extreme weather conditions.

ROADSIDE CLEAN-UP: Monday 21 November, 9am (Note change of date)
- Help keep our stretch of the Pyrenees Highway clean!

- Meet near Tait's Decorative Iron, corner of Willy Milly Rd and Pyrenees Highway, Castlemaine at 9am.
- Garbage bags and safety vests supplied. Wear sturdy footwear and bring your own gloves and water.
- Please contact Geoff Harris (mob 0418 392 183) if you can help with the clean-up.

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club

PROGRAM

Venue for November: The Uniting Church **Chapel** (**Note change of room**) Lyttleton St. Our guest speaker will follow the usual 'observations' session when members can share recent interesting sightings with an option to show a photo or two.

If you have observations to report at the meeting and photo(s) to illustrate your report, please email them to Euan Moore (calamanthus5@bigpond.com) by noon on the day of the meeting.

Excursions are on the Saturday after the monthly meeting. Meet at the Octopus (opposite the motel in Duke St) for departure at 1.30pm unless otherwise advised.

Fri Nov 11 Meeting 7.30pm: Dr. Christina McCowan (Melbourne University) "*Mycobacterium ulcerans* (Buruli ulcer) in our native mammals in the wild"

Sat Nov 12 Excursion 1.30pm: Fryers Ridge with Richard Piesse.

Mon Nov 21 Note change of date Roadside Cleanup: 9am

Fri Dec 9 Meeting 7.30pm: Members' night – a chance to share highlights of your nature-related experiences from the year. You can show photos, a video or a short power-point presentation.

Tues Dec 13: Picnic in the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens, 5pm onwards.

Club website (Web master: Ron Wescott) - www.castlemainefieldnaturalists.org.au

Castlemaine Naturalist - email newsletter material to: newsletter.cfnc@gmail.com

*Deadline for the December edition is Friday November 25th.

Subscriptions for 2022

Ordinary membership: Single \$35, Family \$50

Pensioner or student: Single \$25, Family \$30

Subscription includes postage of the monthly newsletter, Castlemaine Naturalist

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